

REMARKS

These remarks and the above amendments are responsive to the Office action dated August 11, 2006, and are being filed under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111. Claims 33-56 are pending in the application. In the Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 33-44, 46-51, 54, and 55. However, the Examiner merely objected to claims 45, 52, 53, and 56, stating that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form (including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims). Applicant traverses the rejections, contending that all of the claims are patentable in their current form. Nevertheless, to expedite issuance of a patent, applicant has (1) canceled pending claims 43-45, 47, 52, and 56, without prejudice, and (2) amended independent claims 33, 48, and 54 to include, respectively, all of the limitations of "allowable" (objected to) claims 45, 52, and 56. In view of the above amendments and these remarks, applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims, and prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability.

I. Claim Amendments

The present communication amends claims 33, 46, 48, 53, and 54. Exemplary support for the amendments to the independent claims is shown, without limitation, in the following table:

Claim	Exemplary Support
33	Claims 43-45
48	Claim 52
54	Claim 56

Dependent claims 46 and 53 also have been amended to address formal issues created the amendments to independent claims 33 and 48, respectively.

II. Claim Rejections -35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

The Examiner rejected claims 33-44, 46-51, 54, and 55 as being anticipated or obvious. Claims 33-35, 39-44, 46-49, 51, and 54 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Morgan (U.S. Patent No. 4,905,679) and/or Murray (U.S. Patent No. 6,093,188). In addition, claims 33, 36-38, 48, 50, 54, and 55 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shapiro (U.S. Patent No. 4,414,967) in view of Morgan and/or Murray. Applicant traverses the rejections, contending that the rejected claims are patentable over the cited references.

Nevertheless, to expedite the issuance of a patent, applicant has amended independent claims 33, 48, and 54 to include, respectively, all of the limitations of "allowable" (objected to) claims 45, 52, and 56. Accordingly, independent claims 33, 48, and 54 should be allowed. Each of dependent claims 34-42, 46, 49-51, 53, and 55 also should be allowed for depending from an allowable claim, namely, independent claim 33, 48, or 54.

III. Conclusion

Applicant believes that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the

Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

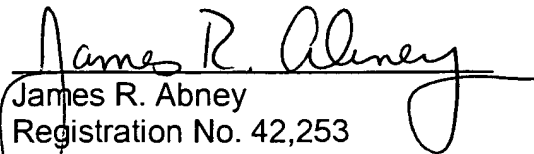
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